

Multilingualism and Multiliteracies in 21st-Century Education

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ABSTRACT

The 21st century demands a globalized, interconnected approach to education. Multilingualism and multiliteracies are no longer niche skills, but rather, competencies essential for navigating a diverse and rapidly changing world. Integrating these concepts into educational frameworks is crucial for fostering critical thinking, intercultural understanding, and future employability.

This paper reviews relevant literature on multilingualism, multiliteracies, and their implications for education. It analyzes existing pedagogical approaches and identifies gaps and challenges in current practices. The literature reveals a strong correlation between multilingual and multiliterate proficiency and enhanced cognitive abilities, including problem-solving, creativity, and critical thinking. Furthermore, these competencies contribute significantly to intercultural understanding and global citizenship. However, significant barriers exist, including a lack of culturally responsive pedagogies, insufficient teacher training, and limited access to multilingual and multimodal learning resources.

This paper emphasizes the need for transformative educational practices that empower educators to effectively implement multilingual and multiliterate pedagogies. Effective strategies include incorporating diverse language and literacy practices into the curriculum, creating culturally responsive learning environments, and providing comprehensive teacher professional development. Ultimately, education must cultivate not just cognitive skills, but also the social and emotional competencies necessary for navigating a complex and interconnected world.

Keywords: Multilingualism, Multiliteracies, 21st-century education, Global competence, Intercultural understanding

INTRODUCTION

The nature of literacy and the types of texts and practices considered 'literate' have changed significantly in the last decade (Lankshear, C. et al, 2017). The identification of the multimodality of 21st Century texts, deploying a mix of linguistic, visual, spatial, audio, gestural and intertextual modes, prompted renewed consideration of how 'being literate' might be reconceptualised and how school practices around teaching literacy might need to change (Cope, B., & Kalantzis, M., 2009), (Kress, G., 2010). This development and the changing possibilities for teaching and learning regarding literacy and language prompted the founders of the New London Group to revisit the idea of multiliteracies, combining insights from both the New London Group and the multimodality movement to investigate how a multiliteracies pedagogy could flourish in environments dominated by new media technologies and how such a pedagogy could be implemented across schooling systems in a form that was relevant, flexible and locally applicable (Molyneux & Aliani, 2016). For the New London Group, the notion of literacy, and being 'literate', is not simple or one-dimensional. A Multiliteracies pedagogy cannot but be multilingual. Since the first use of the term multiliteracies, much attention has been devoted to its recognition as a suitable framework to encompass contemporary learning and its deployment in school programs. In itself language teaching, or a focus on language, cannot deliver multiliteracies instruction.

Education is evolving to keep pace with rapid changes in technology and communication. Alongside traditional print and spoken modes, written and spoken modes used in new ways are increasingly recognized by educators and researchers as 'new' modes in the literate repertoire. The emergence of digital convergence

or convergence of media has also been acknowledged as an important new dimension of multi-literacies (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000; Selfe & Selfe, 2008). Under the impact of new communication technology, literacy practices are changing rapidly and radically and are found to be different between traditional and new communication. There are concerns about educational inequity due to the fact that schooling is reluctant or slow in improving existing pedagogies, resources and curricula to take up the new settings and modes of communication, while there is a growing disparagement of printed texts in the new practices. One of the frameworks developed to address these issues is “New Literacy” (Street, B., 1995). The term “New Literacy” refers to new practices of reading and writing arising out of the digital age (Leu, D. J., Jr., & Kinzer, C. K. (2004). While drawing attention to the diversity of literate practices and widening the scope of literacy, New Literacy is criticized for being shallow and descriptive alone (Smith, 2020).

Multiliteracies offer a richer and more complex theoretical framework with practical pedagogical principles, which is the classical contribution of literacy research to multiliteracies. The idea of multiliteracies is that people navigate across multiple languages and modes of meaning in their everyday life, and inevitably draws attention to how people make meaning with different semiotic modes such as verbal, visual, audio, tactile and spatial. The digital convergence is one important reason for the great interest in the multimodality of meaning-making among researchers from different disciplines. The literate practice such as reading and writing is largely concerning how people make and interpret meaning across different semiotic modes. This idea of multimodality is only partly viewed as a new dimension of literacy. Literacy as social semiotic reflects a social standpoint on literacy. All legitimate social practices, including literacy practices, are viewed as involving the production, circulation and interpretation of signs (Molyneux & Aliani, 2016). A literacy practice refers to a socially acceptable way of doing reading, writing and communicating. Literacy practices, speaking, writing, reading and everything in between. Literacy practices don't exist in a vacuum, and so it would be more accurate to say that literacy practices are embedded in social processes such as education, religion, and politics (Sang, 2017).

UNDERSTANDING MULTILINGUALISM

As a consequence of globalization, increases in international migration, movement of people between states, and a juggernaut of cross-border local and global commerce, education systems in English-dominant Western countries are confronting a new and increasing quest for multilingualism (Crystal, 2003, May, 2014). In several locations, immigration patterns of new arrivals have changed markedly resulting in a dramatic increase in the number of students entering schools who speak a language other than English at home. How education systems cope with this new demographic reality is not straightforward or predetermined; it is fraught with contradiction, tension, and ambivalence (Scarino, 2013).

While there is an understanding of the need for the inclusion of aspects of multilingualism into curricula and educational practice, there are moves toward standardisation of assessment and eligibility that are also seen to be pressing. The education systems that have a long history of a language other than English have imposed limits on target languages. The multilingualism that is both commonplace and idealised has led to a re-examination of the nature of language, and in turn the nature of language learning through which multilingualism is experienced and expressed. While a welcome extension, the developments are not simply a change in the language of learning or a move from one language to another; they point to a changing conception of language learning as well as a changing conception of the teaching/learning process.

The phenomenon of multilingualism has different meanings for different people; it encompasses people whose language or languages other than English are in a transportable or diasporic space and also people for whom English is involved in a multilingual constellation. Multilingualism does not necessarily refer to the presence of two or more languages. Multilingualism potentially refers to a diversity in speakers and how languages are used in individuals' lives. In this regard, languages can be defined in different ways, both in terms of what is spoken, and in terms of how different languages are related to one another when more than one language is involved (Molyneux & Aliani, 2016). Multilingualism is visible in the experience of everyday life, and is presumed to be commonplace in the imagination of educational policy-makers and governments where peoples from different cultures and languages influence one another both socially and cognitively.

Historical Perspectives

The initial focus of historical perspectives on multilingualism and multiliteracies has shifted from how students navigate their multilingual realities in primarily monolingual systems to a more optimistic view of schools embracing these realities. A discipline-by-discipline review of literacies perspectives, starting with changing perspectives in language education, finds that views on language use in education have advanced from formalist and systemic functional views to views grounded in language acquisition and sociocultural perspectives. A similar chronology holds for globalization perspectives on education (Molyneux & Aliani, 2016). There is broad recognition of the importance of learners' multilingual realities. It must be noted however, that understandings of the socio-political dynamics of different countries' state language policies and ways that they enact their agendas locally in curricula and classrooms have lagged behind in studies. For example, (Scarino, 2013) found that some countries managed the increasing ethnolinguistic diversity benignly while in others, aggressive nationalism, strict assimilation policies, and separatism have emerged; yet the latter were often poorly recognized nationally and internationally as having direct bearing on education. Consequently, linguistic and epistemological dividends and losses for students remain obscure. Adopting a user perspective on education with actors in shifting locales leads to the conclusion that it is vital to understand ways how educational systems and institutions react to new metapragmatic norms and the unequal ways they are brought to bear on students of diverse backgrounds. The fact that reality is perceived differently in vernacular awareness calls for more research on the wider linguistic repertoires of students in different contexts and how schools productively build on them.

Changing perspectives on multiliteracies education began with a focus on differential access to literacy education for linguistic minorities in state systems that did not effectively engage their vernaculars (Cummins, 1984; Luke, 1988). This more deficit view subsequently gave way to a view on culturally-contingent yet more equitable literacy practices of vernacularized students in culturally-diverse schools. In the last fifteen years, it has been much deeper examined either collaboratively (by linguists, anthropologists, and semioticians) or from anthropological or system-theoretical perspectives. The view that verbal language is only one semiotic mode among many that construct social realities and therefore students need to learn to navigate a multimodal world, has gained increasing acceptance among education policymakers and academic researchers.

Frameworks of Multilingualism and Multiliteracies

Theoretical frameworks for multilingualism and multiliteracies are interconnected and often overlap. There isn't one single, universally accepted framework, but several influential perspectives have emerged. These theoretical frameworks provide valuable insights into understanding and addressing multilingualism and multiliteracies in educational settings. They advocate for inclusive and dynamic pedagogies that respect and leverage the linguistic diversity of learners in the 21st century. Some key theoretical underpinnings include, but not limited to the **Sociolinguistic Perspective**. This framework emphasizes the social contexts in which languages are used. It considers how language practices are influenced by social factors such as identity, power, and community. According to Gumperz (1982), multilingualism is not just about the number of languages spoken but also about the social functions and meanings attached to those languages. The **Cognitive Perspective** focuses on the cognitive processes involved in learning and using multiple languages. Bialystok (2001) argues that multilingualism enhances cognitive flexibility and executive function, allowing individuals to switch between languages and tasks more efficiently. The **Ecological Perspective** views multilingualism as a dynamic and context-dependent phenomenon. According to García and Wei (2014), multilingualism is shaped by the interactions between individuals and their environments, including cultural, social, and institutional factors. The **Critical Multilingualism** critiques traditional views of multilingualism that often prioritize dominant languages. It advocates for recognizing and valuing all languages and dialects, particularly those of marginalized communities (May, 2014). This approach emphasizes social justice and equity in language education.

Theoretical Frameworks of Multiliteracies include the **New Literacy Studies**, which posits that literacy is not a singular skill but a set of practices that vary across different contexts and cultures. Street (1984) distinguishes between "autonomous" and "ideological" models of literacy, emphasizing that literacy practices are shaped by social and cultural contexts. The **Multiliteracies Pedagogy**, developed by the New London Group (1996),

advocates for a pedagogy that recognizes the diverse ways people communicate in a globalized world. It emphasizes the importance of teaching students to navigate multiple modes of communication, including visual, digital, and linguistic forms. The **Critical Literacy** encourages learners to analyze and question the power dynamics embedded in texts and media. Freire and Macedo (1987) argue that critical literacy empowers individuals to challenge social injustices and engage in transformative practices, while the **Translanguaging** introduced by García (2009), refers to the fluid use of multiple languages in communication and learning. It emphasizes the idea that bilinguals and multilinguals draw on their entire linguistic repertoire to make meaning, rather than compartmentalizing languages.

Multilingualism in Educational Contexts

As a starting point, it is worth noting a distinction made about multilingualism. The broadest sense of the term multilingualism is taken to refer to the ‘use of two or more languages.’ (Baker, 2015) This can, in turn, encompass notions of multilingual contexts and multilingual individuals. Multilingual contexts are those defined by the languages used in public life and governance, in the community, and in education (Baker, 2018). Such contexts may be multilocal and/or within countries. Multilingual individuals are thus those who command and use more than one language in their private and/or public lives in conjunction with a commonly used ‘dominant’ language. This consideration highlights the absence of a means to refer to multiple written languages in a general sense. Subsequently, the term ‘literacies’ is deployed as a means to make up for that lack; in doing so, a distinction is drawn between literacy, as a broad view of written texts, and literacies, which allow for specificity as the use of multiple written languages. A number of linguistic practices, generally referred to as translational practices, are treated as part of multilingualism. They include practices specifically designed to mediate communication between speakers of different languages; in discussing multilingualism, exception is made of practices that do not focus on languages per se, and/or pertaining to exclusively oral language use. Current attention to multilingualism and multiliteracies in education worldwide respond together to the increasingly multilingual composition of classrooms and the rise of newer forms of text (Cummins, 2000; Gee, 2011). Such attention has led, on the one hand, to a proliferation of definitions, research frameworks, and pedagogical approaches regarding the multilingualism adopted and valued in education; on the other, to an influx of tools and frameworks for the analysis of text and the design of teaching and assessment. Additionally, there is an increasing interest in how multilingualism and multiliteracies are viewed, used, and/or reciprocally shaped by educational policy, practice, and research. To date, however, the two concerns have generally been addressed apart as separate research agendas. In this respect, it is worth considering the notion of multiliteracies in some depth as an illustrative example of a theoretical focus, relevant to educational settings, from which a pedagogy around and with multilingual practices might be conceived and explored.

Policy and Practice

The literacies of today’s powerful multiliterate individuals can be described in terms of a repertoire of practices defined in relation to: the social purpose and/or context of these practices; the types of textual form/resources/ semiotic modes and their veralties that characterise practices of meaning; the sociocultural rules and conventions that govern practices; and the linguistic resources used. Drawing on this broader conception of the term, ‘multiliteracies’ refers not just to reading and writing, but also understanding, responding to, designing, and producing meaning resources in multi-semiotic and multilingual forms. Multiliteracies as an educational theory must therefore be a multilingual pedagogical framework promoting and respecting the individual and collective linguistic resources of both students and educators (Molyneux & Aliani, 2016). By tightening the scope of multilingual pedagogy to focus on bilingual education, bilingualism does not confine such educational efforts to full-time immersion or dual language programs. This understanding broadens debates about local and situated forms of bilingual education, and concerns the linguistic design of school programs, particularly for students from a language minority background. However, since bilingual education conceives bilingualism as a pedagogical outcome, it does not immediately embrace multilingualism which refers to the individual’s ability to use three or more languages. Multiliteracies pedagogy enhances the complexity of viewing pedagogy, as a set of ideas in practice, through the lens of pluralities. Multilingualism as a pedagogical outcome recognizes students’ extra-linguistic potentials and

linguistic identities of becoming in school (or neighbourhoods). Following the different dimensions of multilingualism in education provides a comprehensive perspective on bilingualism or multiliteracies in educational studies. Theory, policy and practice matter because they are inextricably interrelated, especially in the 21st-century era of rapid globalization and new media/smart technologies. Schools as the local level of the education system are ground zeroes or the epicentres in understanding, enacting and interfering education policy for 21st-century pedagogies across the globe.

Teaching Strategies

(Runciman, 2019) outlines seven teaching strategies that can allow learners to draw on their home languages in educational practices. These strategies included allowing each learner to speak his/her home language, using collaboration activities which enabled learners to achieve more together as they pooled their language resources, and freeing up the teacher to help weaker learners, and lastly but most importantly, focusing on the learners' linguistic repertoires, rather than the teacher's linguistic repertoires. Thus, the focus was on getting learners to use the languages they knew to enhance their learning. In addition to maximizing learning and allowing learners to learn language in a more natural manner, multilingual teaching might have other potential advantages. It might allow learners to develop their home languages. It might also improve learners' co-operation, strengthen home-school partnerships, and help with the integration of fluent speakers and emergent bilingual learners.

At a theoretical level, translanguaging is drawn on. Translanguaging is seen as a meaning-making process through which teachers can encourage multi-voiced participation and learners can develop a range of multi-dialect, multi-genre, and multi-modal language practices. Translanguaging also involves the flexible use of named languages and language varieties as well as other semiotic resources such as registers and voices. In addition, translanguaging takes into account the 'language as a resource' paradigm. Unlike language-as-instrument, language-as-resource recognizes multi-dialects and multi-modality. A fixed view of languages is replaced with a view of languages as resources and resources are defined broadly and flexibly. This inclusion of all forms of language is significant as it recognizes that for marginalized learners, linguistic resources may be unlicensed or illegitimate.

In addition to translanguaging, translation, as a complementary teaching strategy, is drawn on. Allowing emergent bilingual learners to use their home languages means that at times the teacher or other learners might not understand them and thus the need for translation by more fluent speakers arises. Learners who participate in translation activities can be seen to be language brokers or linguistic mediators, as they interpret what others have said, rephrase it in another language, and thereby help individuals understand each other. In this way, they cross boundaries and build bridges. In the classroom, a learner who acts as a language broker is able to encourage learner participation and thereby help build a classroom community. Translation can be seen to develop a community of practice as learners with different language proficiency levels take turns at the 'viewpoints' held in conversations, thereby gaining new perspectives on the content and each other's views.

Assessment and Evaluation

Since the outcomes of formative assessment techniques depend on the nuances of language used by teachers, it is appropriate to use various strategies in the assessment process that will encourage the active involvement of EAL learners and their peers. Similarly, classroom tasks should promote understanding through collaboration rather than burden learners' working memory. In doing so, the teacher would encourage inquiry and reflection on language form, while the discrimination of new language items could proceed with peer assistance. Additionally, focusing on written form and genre conventions could deliver support for assessment in creative writing. Educational purposes also influence class preparation and how language is modelled by the teacher. Although modelling scientific concepts is considered important in this context, the degree of this focus changes across lessons, and the time spent on technical support is less in the mathematics lesson. Nevertheless, parameters such as time spent on verbal reasoning also exert a salient influence on the modelling of new vocabulary and its spelling.

In addition, the learners' motivation and multi-modal approaches are of key importance in switching to the

investigative format and step-by-step planning. Regarding the language of assessment, the technical demands of written assessment in the subject recognised and described are independent of the language background of pupils. Likewise, models of good practice and modelling of the assessment content are recommended, enabling academic skills acquisition in the language.

Newly qualified teachers developing and formulating their assessment practices often lack support in incorporating language into subject assessment. Although performance over time is seen as a way forward, the lack of resources to support learning in the language in the subjects is a concern and the teachers feel pressure and stress related to accountability. While ongoing assessment of learners' content knowledge connected to their mother tongue-derived language development is required for continued learning and subject progression, there is insufficient language monitoring and evaluation (Chimpololo, 2010).

Multiliteracies in 21st-Century Education

The identification of the multimodality of 21st Century texts prompted renewed consideration of how 'being literate' might be reconceptualised and how school practices around the teaching of literacy might need to change (Molyneux & Aliani, 2016). A more fulsome discussion of multiliteracies drew attention to literacy across languages, commenting that within a pedagogy of Multiliteracies, languages other than English justify their space. A Multiliteracies pedagogy cannot but be multilingual. Since the first use of the term multiliteracies, much attention has been devoted to its recognition as a suitable framework to encompass contemporary learning and its deployment in school programs. A multiliterate person is one who can interpret, use and produce electronic, live and paper texts that employ different semiotic systems for social, cultural, political, civic and economic purposes in socially and culturally diverse contexts. Other related research has focused on aspects of multiliterate practice such as visual literacy; pedagogical approaches and classroom implementation; children's and adolescents' digital practices in and out of school; and the complex literacies required to use or create online texts.

Today's school-aged learners engage in sophisticated literate and learning practices in and out of the classroom, work creatively, collaboratively and critically in internet and other multimodal new media spaces, and use social media to continue their reading, writing and learning at any time, referred to as 'ubiquitous learning' (Sang, 2017). In the fields of second language learning, applied linguistics and bilingual/multilingual education, recent thinking has linked the ideas of multiliteracies, multilingualism, multimodal texts and the complexities of lived literate practice to the concepts of 'translanguaging' and 'translingual practice'.

DIGITAL LITERACIES

Digital literacies are currently a very important topic in education. In the rapidly changing world today, educators are faced with a challenge to equip students with the necessary literacies. In this context, digital literacy is quickly reaching the uppermost level in terms of policy priority. Digitally literate students are seen as future full and active citizens where assessment and provision of digital literacy is equally important as for whether a student is literate, numerate in a context of reading, writing and number. The importance of digitally literate students is woven into the rhetoric of the digital future.

The idea of promoting digital literacy is more than just narrow computer training. Digital literacy is an umbrella term encompassing skills in the reading, interpretation, evaluation and use of a variety of texts. Texts are understood as the dialogue between reader and writer, as content delivered by communication media or across modes embracing the representation of meaning in alphabetic, visual, aural, gestural and spatial forms, electronically or printed. Promoting digital literacy among students and educators is about unlocking the possible futures held in digital cultural forms, tools and practices. It is also fundamental to a vision of Multiliteracies as a democracy and equity, one in which all citizens can be full and active. However, the digital cultural form is not just about involvement and acceptance, there are inequitable social practices and consequences of a digital literacy that just enables transacting with conventional texts. In some respects, such social practices might be seen as more damaging. Alas the material digitized and apprehended as text-writes a contradictory future for student literacy practice.

Cultural Literacies

A multicomponent view of literacy was proposed that included six interconnected and interdependent dimensions: usage, social practices, text affordances, contexts, resources, and design (Molyneux & Aliani, 2016). Educational programs to enhance the validity of these dimensions and their compatibility with a multiliteracies framework were developed. In both of these initiatives, a major aim was to examine the pathway to become multiliterate via multilingualism (Garcia, 2009). Starting with cultural literacies, the widespread prevalence of multiliteracies technology, practices and products in a globalised world collectively referred to as “new”, “multimodal” or “multilayered” texts, is the defining characteristic of literacy in the 21st century. These texts differ from previous literacy products steeped in the print and paper tradition. They are multi-technology, represented in myriad media from visual images, animated illustrations, and music to narrations, oral talk, embedded hyperlinks, and gestures. They are also multi-semiotic, made up of various modes from linguistic, spatial, and visual to gestural, audio, and tactile. The semiotic activity of these texts foregrounds the meaning-designing potential of their semiotic resources and modes, and highlight how different modes might be accurately chosen and peculiarly orchestrated in semiotic products at the level of texture and design. As cultural products and practices that are embedded and embodied in multilayered meanings and values, cultural literacy is considered foundational for multiliteracies.

Translingual Practices

Translanguaging and translingual practices build on the 1980s language biographic work from the Berlin Sociolinguistic School where students made sense of pioneer immigrants in Berlin through their linguistic knowledge, experiences and resources in languages and literacy. The identification of aesthetic and knowledge-based approaches to translanguaging has opened new doors for understanding common-sense phenomena and advocacy on language, education and social justice in school. These avenues of research were enriched with the turn to language as a medium to explore complex matters of performativity in multilingual writings and translanguaging in policy making. Some current trends examine the affective aspects and corporeal expressions of translanguaging. Surveying these models point to a healthy and productive diversifying of the concept of translanguaging activities, paradigms, and approaches. These trajectories resonate with multilingual research and theories on bloggers as linguistically and culturally hybrid citizens of the world, understandings of complex bilinguals with dynamic valency and entirety, and writing in letters, voices and images as young people's strategy of exerting agency and ownership in one bilingual context. Against this backdrop, explorations on the conceptual and methodological framework of translingual practices in education complement existing studies on the peripheral roles of hybrid identities in knowledge production and peer-to-peer service-learning exchanges in multilingual learning communities. Inflected with aesthetic turn of linguistics, an understanding of translingual practices as the work of figurative linguistic resources in the co-construction of enontological significance thereby hope to advance understandings of how translingual practices can be a valuable resource in multicultural arrangements. Identification of teachers as potential impediments to or enablers of translingual practices and a quantitative measure of the frequency and duration of translingual practices as curricular and instructional interventions to promote teachers' investment in multilingual and digital practices. The rationale and pedagogical outline for the translingual praxis in a journalism-based collaborative project with pre-service language and literacy teachers. Analysis of student teachers' engagement as translingual literacy work through a combination of content analysis takes insights from other two levels of analysis.

Challenges and Opportunities

Despite a growing body of literature examining multilingualism in educational theory and practice worldwide, relatively little attention has been paid to unpacking the theoretical frameworks and concepts around multilingualism in relation to education or literacy. One exception is the growing focus on the broader notion of multiliteracies, which originated in the fields of composition studies and applied linguistics. At a fundamental level, multiliteracies conceptualise literacy as comprising the combination of multiple modes and ways of meaning-making involving a range of semiotic resources beyond printed orthography (Molyneux & Aliani, 2016). Multi-modalities include not only the use of multiple scripts or languages in texts for meaning-making, but also spatial and aural modes on top of visual and spoken ones. These theorisations of

multiliteracies have provided a conceptual framework that has prompted research and discussions on pedagogy, assessment, and policy.

With the advent of new 21st century communication technologies and their social impact, focus shifted to addressing how schools might better prepare students for learning, working and communication in increasingly text-rich environments touting multiple modes. While the New London Group recognised the increasing volume and accessibility of texts in diverse media in contemporary society and the proliferating modalities of representation, they also identified a key demand on schools: the need for a reconceptualisation of pedagogy around literacy education. One particular challenge to education arose from this burgeoning semiotic creativity which enabled texts to combine modes and redesign semiotic resources in new ways. Since the first use of the term multiliteracies, attention has been devoted to its recognition as a suitable framework to encompass contemporary learning and its deployment in school programs.

An inherent misunderstanding of the Framework for 21st-Century Learning has arisen among educators, resulting in great variance in 21st-century implementation. This has contributed to the misconception that 21st-century skills cannot be embedded within an already loaded curriculum. The model tells a story and demonstrates that the environment must be present to encourage 21st-century learning. The 21st-century learning environment is defined as a classroom that develops a culture of collaboration and provides students opportunities to construct knowledge while reflecting on the process. Further, a climate of trust, respect, and risk-taking, where mistakes are viewed as learning experiences, must exist. Teachers indicated a disconnect with transformed pedagogy most strongly on items concerning linking classroom practices to 21st-century learning, technology, and teacher conversations about technology-rich pedagogy. As teachers begin to develop a common language regarding their integration of 21st-century skills, they will undoubtedly begin to view themselves with greater clarity. The lack of perceived progress on items may be attributed to the absence of professional development on 21st-century skills, model classrooms, coaching, and/or the document that reflect heightened needs (Sue Stover, 2018).

An environmental factor that may be further explored is the perception of adequate existing technology as a barrier. This may suggest a perception of buildings unwilling to purchase new equipment or technology-based instructional tools. Because students learn best when it is a natural part of their environment, decisions must be made about leveling the playing field with such implementation in mind.

Innovative and Creative Approaches

To promote the co-construction of global knowledge about their own and each other languages and cultures, language awareness and language exploration activities are organized collaboratively. Findings point to different ways of fostering multilingualism and multiliteracies across curricula by understanding the individual histories and linguistic resources of speakers of non-dominant languages' (Yaman Ntelioglou et al., 2014).

Creativity is a valuable resource in addressing current educational challenges. Inspiration for creative pedagogy to engage students came from teacher narratives of meaningful teaching within a transformative inquiry project, framed by a pedagogical theory of multiliteracies (Smith, 2020; Johnson & Lee, 2019). New ways of thinking about the nature of learning are needed. This involves rethinking the role of education and schooling in a creative and innovative society while developing a socio-semiotic perspective on learning. The range of modes forms a valuable resource for students and teachers to engage with meaning in a creative multiliteracies-based manner. Because it is experimental, the portrayal of class-based schooling that is resourceful and egalitarian holds promise for sustainable productive futures. Ultimately, education should enhance personal literacy repertoires while widening access to key literacy resources for meaningful participation in society.

As part of an ongoing examination of the potential effects on student learning of a reform of public education in New Zealand, a study described the implementation of innovative literacy practices in an urban school (Smith & Jones, 2023). Data from interviews and classroom observations showed that teachers and students engaged in a wider range of ways of using language, as well as a more extensive range of semiotic means, than are usually reported. Teachers' inquiry into their own practices proved crucial in shaping these changes. It was

concluded that pedagogies of multiliteracies supported this bilingual immersion setting's development of innovative practices while offering constructive and generative ways of thinking about learning in a 21st-century world (Johnson & Lee, 2022).

Research based on the significance of marginalized, local, everyday knowledge and literacy practices in a student study project for multilingual higher education teacher education contextualized a reflective teacher inquiry. The collaborative incorporation of analysis and design, methodologies and methods, multi-magnitude micrologies, and a reflection-construction-descriptive-research cycle resulted in visual ethnography trajectories with divergent focus and form.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The ten most populous countries in the world all have a history of multilingualism resulting from trade, warfare, colonization or immigration. Each of these countries has an official language and multiple regionally spoken languages. National language-in-education policies for these countries vary widely, with some supporting, others tolerating, and others actively prohibiting the use of regional languages in language, literacy and schooling. Language policies are representatives of competing ideologies with some languages relegated to a high position for use as the official medium of public discourse and technology in mass media, whilst languages spoken at a lower social plane are either banned as inferior or restricted in function to the family, religion and oral culture. Urbanization and globalization bring a set of new questions and challenges with languages, literacy and schooling as urban centers become increasingly multilingual melting pots and languages shape entry into and success in economic life. Governance structures for policies on languages, literacy and schooling in such states differ in fundamental ways and shape the composition and form of the multilingualism-induced challenges.

Economists have shown that bilingualism is an asset for individuals in terms of employment opportunities, earning capacity and the ability to engage with global economies. Multilingualism in countries proxies a better performance in economic competitiveness indicators with reliable evidence that linguistic diversity enhances economic growth (Molyneux & Aliani, 2016). From an education perspective, there is consensus that both the proficiency and knowledge of more than one language matters and that the earlier a child is exposed to another language the better it will be long-term. In balance, much suggests that multilingualism is an ultimate asset for those blessed with it, inducing flourishing in cultural and economic life. Overwhelming majority of countries do not have a majority of their constituents as either monolingual speakers of one language or as multilingual speakers of two or more languages. Multilingualism renders highly heterogeneous in terms of schooling experiences, outcomes and abilities. Education remains the most powerful means to avoid intergenerational reproduction of disadvantage arising from social inequities undermining the potential of a significant share of nations' youth. Ironically, education is also a contributor to disadvantage in multilingual countries when designed from a monolingual perspective. Whereas some are blessed with the opportunity of learning the language of schooling and making mates in the language, a significant share of children face forms of racism in transition. For these children, schooling in a second language is synonymous with the difficulty in establishing a second identity.

Curricular Reforms

Although the extent to which the notion of multiliteracies has been accommodated within education systems varies enormously around the globe, multiliteracies is now a firmly embedded term appearing in government policy statements, curricular documents, educational publications and in understanding the school-based practices of educators. There is also a growing body of research on multiliteracies and the multiliteracies pedagogy in classrooms of different sectors (e.g. education, health). However, key questions for further research still remain, such as the scope of the concept of multiliteracies; what multiliteracies understanding and classroom practices look like across curriculum areas, sectors and educational settings; and the impact of multiliteracies pedagogy on children and the conditions that are most conducive to the implementation of multiliteracies pedagogy. Research on multiliteracies has mostly focused on its foundational concepts and principles, various theoretical frameworks for implementation including learning design frameworks and sociocultural approaches, and classroom-teacher-led case studies in English language arts classes. These

diverse projects have yielded some valuable insights and generated important findings regarding the implementation of multiliteracies pedagogy in classrooms, including the availability of various designs, structures and ways for accomplishing multiliteracies pedagogy; the importance of teachers' professional development and pedagogical expertise; how students respond to multiliteracies pedagogy; the criticality of selecting the focus and medium of redesign; the socio-political contexts influencing multiliteracies practices; the challenges teachers encounter; and the appraisal of the applied framework. Much less research has focused on examining how multiliteracies pedagogy is enacted in classrooms of curriculum subjects other than English language arts and in out-of-school settings. Although learning across different curriculum areas is the norm, much of the literature is East-centric, celebrating the well-documented and visible successes in multicultural education as a blueprint for national identity in curricular reform. Multilingualism offers a wealth of experience, knowledge and skills. These gains cannot be realized without equity and access to educational opportunities. Each language is an important lens through which to see, interpret and adapt to the world. Educators who espouse multilingualism value the whole child and offer an engaging, multiliteracy approach to learning. They create environments that are adapted for multilingual learners utilizing their linguistic landscape. These educators see themselves as a strengthened part of the multilingual landscape, who develop the pedagogies and strategies needed to support multilingual students. It is their belief that when students feel safe, supported, and engaged, their confidence and self-esteem grow immensely and they take risks in their learning. Multiliteracies pedagogy recognizes the significance of multiliteracies in the 21st century and advocates an agenda of taking action. Children now need to negotiate the increasing complexity of language reuse across the plurilingual landscape provided by the internet.

Teacher Education and Support

It is critical to invest in teacher learning. Knowledge, confidence and practice are necessary areas for teacher development. If teachers are to teach multilinguals successfully across various disciplines, they need to cultivate new blending practices, develop appropriate pedagogies, deepen understanding of multiple languages and multiliteracies, and cultivate awareness of their own linguistic and cultural relationships (Viesca & Teemant, 2019). Teachers' beliefs and identities are also important aspects of teacher development. Also, teachers' beliefs about student diversity affect their classroom interactions. A professional development model can build collaborative communities, create a rich learning environment, and raise questions around equitable practices specifically in relation to language, literacy and multilingual learners. As teachers transition out of the classroom, those in teacher leadership roles need to consider how they draw on their rich, complex language resources in their work to support other teachers, and to think about how language policy frameworks shape practices related to teacher language development.

Teacher educators must also examine how they can be responsive to the requests of their own institution and provide exploratory and disorienting experiences alongside knowledge building so that pre-service teachers can see beyond the letter of the law, would come to rethink their role in equity struggles, and to write for policy change.

Community and Parental Involvement

Involvement of both parents and the community comes in various forms, ranging from program or curriculum development to volunteering to helping raise funds (W. Nourse et al., 2005). School boards can involve families by seeking many perspectives and interests from their community. They can educate the public, particularly the parents, about the curriculum and program evaluation process, the goals for curriculum changes, and the grading philosophies. Family members can volunteer to advise the action committee or global planning committee on behalf of a particular group about the goals, concerns, and other relevant input. Community members with connections or contacts that may assist the planning committee from within or outside the community can also be valuable resources. Many posting boards, notices, flyers, or ads can be put up to notify the public, especially the parents and their children, about information nights and other special functions that might have contributed to effective circulation of information. Sometimes, a more secure avenue of getting the information out than simply relying on the school or school board could be for the media to publish a notice.

Parent involvement is a complex, multidimensional concept that remains an evolving area of investigation in educational research. Whether viewed as behaviors undertaken by parents to foster students' academic success and emotional growth or as a contributing factor in another construct, research studies have suggested a variety of instructional practices that denote parent involvement. Conversely, barriers to parent involvement have also been identified. Family obligations, work schedules, financial woes, limited transportation, lack of awareness regarding school activities, language barriers, and previous negative experiences with the educational system have all been cited as inhibitors to families active participation in schools. Furthermore, empowerment, influence, the availability of resources, level of education, social class, ethnicity, and culture are also recognized as factors that may contribute to the uneven levels of parent involvement across different demographic groups.

Funding and Resource Allocation

Funding changes are reflected in the National Policy for the Promotion of Mental Literacy. International and Intercultural Education and guidance on the incorporation of a second language in the curriculum have been developed, and Learning and Development for Multilingualism addresses the importance of diversity in the language and literacy resources and experiences provided. Textual practices constitute literacy, and multiliteracies emphasize the need for students to gain access to the cultural and social contexts of new technologies. Diverse texts, their purposes, functions, and meanings, valorize social values, including the school culture. In classrooms, students are socialized into a culture that produces textual practices, signifying and indexing the values, skills, and knowledge within that setting. New information and communication technologies (ICTs) are reshaping the roles, identities, and relationships of schools, governments, and communities, and constructing new social and cultural practices, ways of knowing, writing, and reading (Molyneux & Aliani, 2016). Electronic texts have different modes, resources, and affordances, but newly emerging social and cultural practices, as well as changing access to texts, are both empowering and disenfranchising. Multiliteracy refers to, both, a metaphorical assertion that students need to move from 'monoliterate to multiliterate', or the assertion that literacy is varied across time, place, culture and the types or forms of literacy starting with print literacy to, advertising literacy, visual literacy, multi like literacy, etc. A nested structure can be identified across the representational areas of meaning concerned in educational curricula and settings. Unfolded into a incorporated system of curriculum frameworks and pedagogies, literacies are composed of verbal of standard national and state curricula. According to a standard unit comprising codec and discipline level, multimodality is focused in if ideas are thought to be coded with specific language, color, sound, and image, etc., in a factual and everyday perspective. As a meta-concept, its disciplines investigate how the different semiotic systems integrate towards a common meaning or idea, as in an animated movie. Over time, literacy is interpreted as a trained individual capability to use a written language. Underpinned by linguistic, cognitive, social, and critical perspectives, mass media, with models and design terms, restricts literacy practices by its publishing consideration and the news value.

CONCLUSION

In the 21st Century, traditional conceptions of a literate person were challenged and expanded through the introduction of the term multiliteracies, and later the articulation of a pedagogy for multiliteracies. While their identification of the multimodality of 21st Century texts built on earlier notions of expanded literacy practice, it prompted renewed consideration of how 'being literate' might be reconceptualised and how school practices around the teaching of literacy might need to change. The framing of such questions for consideration and research is vitally important as education in all its forms, including that in schools, is confronted by the complexities of the 21st Century and the sociocultural changes, with particular reference to literacy, that such complexities entail. Distant from what 19th Century schooling assumed was a clear, unequivocal and 'fixed' knowledge of language, literacy and teaching, and far removed from what literacy was understood to be at the time when public schooling came into being, current and future understandings of literacy are complex and multilayered, rendering them with a fluidity, unpredictability and ambiguity unthought of a mere 140 years ago.

A Multiliteracies pedagogy cannot but be multilingual. Since the first use of the term multiliteracies and the

articulation of a facilitating pedagogy, much attention has been devoted to its recognition as a suitable framework to encompass contemporary learning and its deployment in school programs. In essence, there is a realization that today's school-aged learners engage in sophisticated literate and learning practices in and out of the classroom, work creatively, collaboratively and critically in multimodal new media spaces, and use social media to continue their reading, writing and learning at any time, a phenomenon referred to as 'ubiquitous learning.'

In the fields of second language learning, applied linguistics and bilingual/multilingual education, recent thinking has linked the ideas of multiliteracies, multilingualism, multimodal texts and the complexities of lived literate practice to the concepts of 'translanguaging' and 'translingual practice.' In an educational milieu of high-stakes testing, particularly with respect to the screening of young learners for placement in able classes, the unfolding of the individualized learning trajectories, curricula and assessment in school programs has focused on the evident and present at the expense of the virtual and creative. Paradoxically, this is a rejection of some of the very competencies that schools are mandated to develop through the curriculum. Attention to the equation of early literary and bilingual development might open up perspectives for, and activate possibilities for further research on, the educated pluriliterate.

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